

Message Text

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43

ORIGIN SS-15

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CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCLANT

CINCPAC

USDOCOSOUTH

COMAC SCOTT AFB ILL

COGARD

S E C R E T STATE 262566

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOR POLADS ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8484 DTG 041701Z NOV JUT ACTION

SECSTATE INFO USMISSION NATO 04 NOV 75

QUOTE

S E C R E T ATHENS 8484

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR NATO GR US

SUBJECT: SOUDA BAY

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REF: A. STATE 258327; B. USNATO 5948; C. CJUSMAG ATHENS
031340Z OCT 75

1. ON RECEIPT OF REF A, I SPOKE BY TELEPHONE WITH
DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF ON SATURDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 1,
AND SAID THAT I WISHED TO SEE HIM TO DISCUSS SEVERAL
COMPLEX AND IMPORTANT MATTERS CONCERNING SOUDA BAY. HE
AGREED TO SET ASIDE AMPLE TIME NOVEMBER 4, FOR A FULL
DISCUSSION AND AT THE MEETING TODAY POL/MIL OFFICER
PUGH WAS THE ONLY OTHER PERSON PRESENT.

2. I BEGAN BY TELLING AVEROFF THAT I WISHED TO TAKE UP
FOUR IMPORTANT AND INTERRELATED MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE
AIRBASE AT SOUDA BAY. I BEGAN WITH THE PROBLEM OF CONSTRUC-
TION OF A NEW RUNWAY AT THE AIRBASE AND SET FORTH THE FIVE
POINTS CONTAINED IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF REF A. I EXPLAINED THE
PROBLEM WITH THE HELP OF A MAP OF THE AIRBASE PROVIDED TO
US BY OIC, NAVDET SOUDA BAY, WHICH I SUBSEQUENTLY LEFT
WITH HIM. DURING OUR CONVERSATION ON THIS POINT, AVEROFF
TELEPHONED HAFC STAFF OFFICERS TO VERIFY HAF INTENTIONS
RE A NEW RUNWAY, WITH WHICH HE HAD NOT BEEN FAMILIAR.
HIS INITIAL AND PERSONAL REACTION WAS THAT HE COULD NOT
ACCEPT THAT GREECE WAS UNABLE TO DO WHAT IT WISHED ON ITS
OWN SOVEREIGN TERRITORY BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE GOG HAD
A RESPONSIBILITY NOT TO DAMAGE FACILITIES BEING USED BY
NATO AND THE UNITED STATES. HE UNDERTOOK TO EXAMINE CARE-
FULLY THE PROJECT
FOR A NEW RUNWAY IN LIGHT OF THE
CONSIDERATIONS I HAD PUT TO HIM AND TO BE IN TOUCH FURTHER
WITH US ABOUT THE MATTER.

3. TURNING TO THE PROBLEM OF A POSSIBLE HAFC DECISION
TO STATION THE THIRD SQUADRON OF A-7'S AT SOUDA AB
RATHER THAN AT LARISSA AB, AS ORIGINALLY PROGRAMMED,
I MADE THE SIX POINTS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF REF A.
I STRESSED THAT POSTPONEMENT OF ACTION TO ORDER GSE
WOULD RESULT IN DELAY IN RECEIPT OF EQUIPMENT WHICH WAS
NECESSARY FOR THE THIRD SQUADRON IF IT WERE TO BE
LOCATED AT LARISSA AB. I NOTED ESTIMATES OF COSTS
INVOLVED AND SUGGESTED THAT STATIONING OF THIRD SQUADRON
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AT SOUDA AB WOULD OCCASION CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FACILITIES
WHOSE COST WOULD PROBABLY BE OF SAME GENERAL MAGNITUDE
AS GSE FOR SEPARATE STATIONING OF THIRD SQUADRON. IN
EITHER EVENT, I FELT THAT HE SHOULD BE APPRISED OF THE
PROBLEM NOW AND BE AWARE THAT NO U.S. FUNDS COULD BE
PROVIDED BEYOND THOSE ALREADY BEING REQUESTED FROM
CONGRESS. AVEROFF IMMEDIATELY PERCEIVED THAT WE WERE
APPREHENSIVE THAT HAFC MIGHT HAVE DESIGNS ON U.S.-UTILIZED

AREA AT SOUDA AB, AND REASSURED ME THAT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THIS NOT THE CASE. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD ALSO LOOK INTO THIS SITUATION IN SOME DETAIL.

4. I THEN BROACHED THE SUBJECT OF U.S. NAVY'S NEED TO RETURN LEVEL OF ITS ACTIVITY AT SOUDA AB TO AT LEAST THE LEVEL PROVIDED FOR IN THE AGREEMENT OF JULY 13, 1959 AND OUR INTEREST IN NEGOTIATING A NEW AGREEMENT FOR EXPANDED USE OF THAT FACILITY. IN ADDITION TO MAKING THE POINTS OF PARAGRAPH 4, REF A., I WENT INTO THE BACKGROUND OF U.S. NAVY USE OF SOUDA AB IN RECENT YEARS, INCLUDING THE NEED SINCE THE MID-1960'S FOR EXPANDED USE AS SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON STRENGTH AND LEVEL OF ACTIVITY EXPANDED. I ADDED THAT U.S. NAVY HAD BEEN SEEKING TO FORMALIZE EXPANDED USE IN EITHER A THIRD AMENDMENT TO EXISTING AGREEMENT OR A NEW AGREEMENT SINCE AT LEAST 1971, AND PERHAPS EARLIER. AVEROFF'S INITIAL REACTION WAS THAT IN VIEW OF AGITATION IN CRETE AGAINST U.S. PRESENCE, IT WOULD BE MOST DIFFICULT FOR GOG TO ALLOW EXPANDED USE OF SOUDA AB. I POINTED OUT THAT SINCE AUGUST 1974 U.S. NAVY USE OF THIS BASE HAD BEEN SEVERELY LIMITED AND WAS WELL BELOW LEVEL PERMITTED BY EXISITING AGREEMENT, REMINDING HIM AT THE SAME TIME THAT THROUGH HIS INTERVENTION IN FEBRUARY 1976 THE U.S. NAVY WAS NOW OPERATING TWO FLIGHTS A WEEK AFTER MONTHS OF VIRTUAL NON-USE. I SHOWED HIM THE RELEVANT PROVISIONS (ARTICLE 3 AND PARTICULARLY THE SECOND SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH D OF THAT ARTICLE) OF THE 1959 AGREEMENT TO CONVINCE HIM THAT WE WERE NOT BEING ALLOWED EVEN THE LEVEL OF USE PROVIDED FOR IN THAT AGREEMENT, AND URGED THAT HE TAKE ACTION TO PERMIT AT LEAST THIS LEVEL. I REITERATED OUR DESURE IN ADDITION TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS ON A NEW AGREEMENT FOR SOUDA AB.

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AVEROFF THOUGHT THAT SUCH AN AGREEMENT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS AND I POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. I EXPRESSED OUR READINESS TO DISCUSS IT AT ANY TIME. I ALSO DREW AVEROFF'S ATTENTION TO THE LETTER GIVEN HIM EARLY IN OCTOBER ON THIS SUBJECT BY CHIEF JUSMAGG (REF. C). AVEROFF THEN SAID THAT HE WOULD LOOK INTO ALL OF THE SOUDA AB ISSUES I HAD RAISED AND WOULD BE IN TOUCH EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH LT. GEN. ECONOMOU, CHIEF HAF. C.

5. AT THIS POINT OUR MEETING WAS BREAKING UP AND I ASKED MR. PUGH TO GO ON AHEAD OF ME WHILE I REMAINED BEHIND FOR A FURTHER, PRIVATE WORD WITH AVEROFF. IN THIS PRIVATE MEETING I MADE THE POINTS SET FORTH IN PARAGRAPH 5, REF A. I TOLD AVEROFF THAT THE ADMINISTRATION

HAD PROPOSED AN EXTREMELY GENEROUS AND IMPORTANT PROGRAM
OF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO GREECE AS AN
EXTRAORDINARY GESTURE OF SUPPORT TO THIS COUNTRY
DURING ITS PRESENT DIFFICULT PERIOD. I SAID THAT
IT HAD NEVER BEEN OUR INTENTION, NOR DID I DISCERN THE
SLIGHTEST DESIRE IN THE USG WHEN I WAS IN WASHINGTON
RECENTLY, TO MAKE A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN THE
ASSISTANCE WE HOPED TO PROVIDE AND THE FACILITIES MADE
AVAILABLE TO US BY THE GOG. HOWEVER, I ADDED, IT
SIMPLY WOULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD IF ON THE ONE HAND THE
USG WAS GOING ALL THAT
TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO GREECE
AND AT THE SAME TIME THE GOG WAS TAKING AN UNCOOPERATIVE AND
HARD-NOSED POSITION WITH US ON SOUDA BAY OR, INDEED, THE
WHOLE HOST OF BILATERAL QUESTIONS -- INCLUDING THE
CURRENT BASE NEG
TIATIONS -- THAT WERE UNDER DISCUSSION
BETWEEN US. AVEROFF HAD NO DIFFICULTY GRASPING THE POINT.
HE REAFFIRMED TO ME -- AS HE HAS MANY TIMES BEFORE --
THE STRONG DESIRE AND INTENTION OF THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT
TO COOPERATE WITH US AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE. HE ALLUDED
AGAIN TO SOME OF THE SEVERE POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS WITHIN
GREECE AND SAID WE SHOULD HAVE NO DOUBT THAT HE AND THE
CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE AS HELPFUL AND FORTHCOMING
WITH US AS THEY FELT THEY POSSIBLY COULD. HE ALSO
EXPRESSED ONCE AGAIN HIS OWN AND THE GOG'S DEEP
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APPRECIATION OF THE PROPOSAL TO OUR CONGRESS FOR
SUBSTANTIAL NEW ASSISTANCE TO GREECE.

6. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO MILIARY
ADDRESSEES AS DESIRED.
KUBISCH

UNQUOTE. KISSINGER

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NNN

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